

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Enterprise Canal at Big Dry Creek Improvement Project Fresno Irrigation District Fresno County California

FONSI-08-89

Recommended by:

Patti Clinton
Natural Resources Specialist
South-Central California Area Office

Date: _____

Concurred by:

Mike Kinsey
Acting Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist
South-Central California Area Office

Date: _____

Concurred by:

Laura Myers
Chief, Resources Management Division
South-Central California Area Office

Date: _____

Approved by:

Tony Buelna
Acting Deputy Area Manager
South-Central California Area Office

Date: _____



Enterprise Canal at Big Dry Creek Improvement Project, Fresno Irrigation District, Fresno County, California

In accordance with section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the South-Central California Area Office of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), has determined that the award of a Water 2025 Challenge Grant to Fresno Irrigation District (FID) for improvements to the Enterprise Canal at Big Dry Creek is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment and an environmental impact statement is not required. This Finding of No Significant Impact is supported by Reclamation's Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) Number EA-08-89, *Enterprise Canal at Big Dry Creek Improvement Project, Fresno Irrigation District, Fresno County, California*, and is hereby incorporated by reference.

Background

The goal of Water 2025 Challenge Grant program is to prevent crises and conflict over water in the western United States. The Challenge Grant Program is designed to contribute to this goal by providing 50 percent funding for projects that will conserve water, increase water use efficiency, or enhance water management, using advanced technology, improvements to existing facilities, and water banks and markets. FID applied for a Challenge Grant in fiscal year 2008 for the Enterprise Canal at Big Dry Creek Improvement Project, Fresno, CA.

Reclamation proposes to award a Grant to partially fund improvements to the Enterprise Canal at Big Dry Creek. The Proposed Action involves funding the replacement of the existing siphon structure with new control and diversion structures that will allow improved water management of water that enters into the Enterprise Canal and is carried downstream. This includes construction of a new control structure on the Enterprise Canal with automatic control gates; construction of a new spill structure into Big Dry Creek with automatic control gates; replacement of the existing siphon structure; and connection to FID's telemetry system. Construction will begin in fall 2009 with completion anticipated for spring 2010.

Reclamation's finding that implementation of the Proposed Action will result in no significant impact to the quality of the human environment is supported by the following findings:

FINDINGS

Surface Water Resources

The Proposed Action will improve control of the flowrate downstream to more accurately meet demand and handle flow fluctuations thereby increasing the amount of water that will be diverted at this location and delivered to recharge and banking facilities.

The Proposed Action will also allow water to be diverted to a conveyance system that could deliver water to FID's Waldron Pond. Once recharged into Waldron Pond, FID will pump groundwater stored in the bank to deliver to agricultural users downstream of the bank instead of

delivering surface water to these users. That surface water will then be made available to market.

The Proposed Action will allow water potentially lost down the Enterprise Canal during shutdowns to be utilized at recharge basins along Big Dry Creek. There will be no significant impacts to surface water resources.

Groundwater Resources

The Proposed Action will help alleviate some of the strain felt by all groundwater users in the area by helping to sustain the groundwater levels adjacent to and within FID. This will be a slight benefit to groundwater resources. Therefore, there will be no significant impacts from the Proposed Action.

Air Quality

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation will award a Grant to FID for the replacement of the existing diversion structure with new control and diversion structures. The results of the air quality analysis indicated that no State of California air quality standards will be exceeded. Therefore, the Proposed Action will have no significant impacts to air quality.

Land Use

The Proposed Action involves construction activities to replace and improve an existing facility. The Proposed Action will continue to divert storm water from the Enterprise Canal for delivery to downstream agricultural users, recharge basins, or FID's groundwater banking facility. The storm water is available intermittently and will not result in decisions for long-term land use changes. This water will support existing agricultural, municipal and industrial users. Therefore, there will be no significant impacts to land use.

Biological Resources

Under the Proposed Action, because of the absence of native habitat and special-status species, the Proposed Action will not impact these resources. Construction activities will occur when the canal and creek are dewatered. The Proposed Action site has been disturbed in the past. The diversion and conveyance of this water will occur in existing facilities. No new water supplies will be created. The water will be available intermittently and will not lead to long-term land use changes. The water will be delivered to lands that have already been disturbed. The water will not be used to place untilled or new lands into production, or to convert undeveloped land to other uses. The Proposed Action will have no effect on federally listed species. Therefore, there will be no significant impacts from the Proposed Action.

Cultural Resources

The Proposed Action involves construction at a site that has been heavily disturbed in the past. It is unlikely that cultural resources exist. Nevertheless, the Proposed Action involves removing and replacing a facility that is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Reclamation is consulting with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to discuss the significance of this facility and potential for preserving it. No construction of new facilities or destruction of existing facilities will occur until the consultation with SHPO has concluded.

Indian Trust Assets

No Indian Trust Assets (ITA) are involved in the Proposed Action, the Proposed Action will not affect ITA. Therefore, there will be no significant impacts from the Proposed Action.

Socioeconomic Resources

The Proposed Action will allow storm water to be managed similar to historic practices. The Proposed Action is a water conservation project that will allow greater flexibility in beneficial uses. Due to the unreliable availability of storm water, the Proposed Action will not result in major changes to existing socioeconomic conditions. Therefore, there will be no significant impacts from the Proposed Action.

Environmental Justice

The Proposed Action will not cause dislocation, changes in employment, or increase flood, drought, or disease. The Proposed Action will not disproportionately impact economically disadvantaged or minority populations. Employment opportunities for low-income wage earners and minority population groups will be within historical conditions. Disadvantaged populations will not be subject to disproportionate impacts. Therefore, the Proposed Action will not significantly impact disadvantaged populations.

Climate Change

The awarding of a Grant indirectly influences greenhouse gas emissions but by only marginal amounts. There is a potential for global climate change impacts to the Proposed Action. However, the construction of the replacement facilities will be a short term project; climactic conditions will not be much different from the current climactic conditions. Therefore, there will be no significant impacts to global climate change.

Cumulative Impacts

Modifications and improvements to facilities are ongoing to replace or improve aging facilities or as new technologies are made available.

The Proposed Action when added to other projects will not result in long-term changes in overall water supplies. The Proposed Action will continue to use storm water when available. Therefore, the Proposed Action will not result in cumulative impacts to water quality or quantity.

The Proposed Action is similar to other ongoing and planned projects to repair existing facilities and improve the flexibility and options to use available water supplies. No new water supplies will be created. The Proposed Action will not contribute to cumulative impacts to groundwater quality or quantity.

The Proposed Action, when added to past, present and future actions will not result in cumulative impacts to biological resources. Construction activities will occur within existing facilities and occur when the Enterprise Canal and Big Dry Creek are dewatered. The Proposed Action will not interfere with implementation and compliance with existing Biological Opinions or operational practices to protect fish and wildlife resources. The Proposed Action will have no direct or indirect impacts on special-status biological resources, and therefore it will not contribute cumulatively to impacts on these resources in the project area.